REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the careful review of this application. Claims 1-5, 8-12, 15-19, and 31-33 are pending after entry of the present Amendment. Claims 6, 7, 13, 14, and 20-30 were previously cancelled. Amendments were made to claims to better define what Applicants claim to be the invention and to comply with the requirements set forth in the Office Action. New independent claims 31-33 were added. These amendments do not introduce any new matter, and as such, do not require a new search.

Claim Objections under 37 CFR § 1.75(c):

The Office has maintained objections to claims 4, 5, 11, 12, 18, and 19, as failing to further limit the apparatus for being drawn to a future intended use of the apparatus. To overcome the objections, the Applicants have amended the claims to further limit the apparatus by defining that the pin is movably defined within the height adjustment slot and slides between the last position and the initial position and vice versa. Accordingly, Applicants submit that as amended, claims 4, 5, 11, 12, 18, and 1 are not drawn at the future intended use and that the claims, as amended, comply the requirements set forth by the Office. Accordingly, Applicants request that the claim objections be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112:

The Office has rejected claims 1-5, 8-12, and 15-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph asserting that the claims are based on a disclosure which is not enabling. Specifically, the Office asserts that the claims lack any biased structure or other centrifugally operative structure.

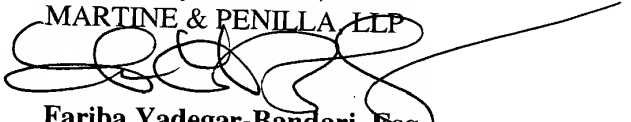
Applicants respectfully traverse the Office's assertion, as amended, independent claims 1, 8, and 15 specifically recite the centrifugally operative structure. As amended, independent claims 1, 8, and 15 specifically define that the wafer backside plate automatically and independently slides to the second position by the centrifugal force and that the wafer backside plate slides down to the first position when the shaft stops spinning. To be more specific, the wafer backside plate automatically slides up due to centrifugal force and slides down when spinning of the wafer backside plate is stopped. In this manner, the centrifugal force generated as a result of spinning the central shaft provides the inertia to cause the wafer backside to rotate during the rotational wafer processing. However, as the central shaft is engaged to the cylindrical edge lip of the backside plate or the inner surface of the edge lip of the backside plate, the wafer backside plate is caused to slide up or down for a limited distance due to the centrifugal force. Thus, the Applicants respectfully submit that the claimed invention, as defined in claims 1, 8, and 15 provide adequate centrifugally operative structure to support the sliding of the wafer backside plate to the second position

and back to the first position. Accordingly, the Applicants submit that the apparatus defined in independent claims 1, 8, and 15 are enabled in view of the description provided in the specification of the subject application. Additionally, it must be noted that the descriptions and explanations provided in the specification are merely examples of structures that may be implemented to cause the wafer backside plate be moved to the second position and the first position.

As to the new independent claims 31-33, claim 31 recites that the wafer backside plate automatically slides to the up position and the down position. Claim 32 defines that the shaft includes a height adjustment slot that engages the wafer backside plate and that the wafer backside plate automatically slides to an up position by centrifugal. In addition to the height adjustment slot, claim 33 further defines that the wafer backside plate includes cylindrical edge lip that includes a pin, that the height adjustment slot engages the pin, and that the pin is configured to slide within the height adjustment slot. As can be appreciated, the centrifugal force pushes the pin defined within the cylindrical edge lip of the wafer backside plate. However, because the centrifugal force is being applied horizontally and that the pin cannot be pushed any further in the horizontal plane, the pin is pushed upwardly along the height adjustment slot. As can be appreciated, new independent claims 32 and 33 specifically define two exemplary centrifugally operative structures.

In view of the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions concerning the present Amendment, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at (408) 749-6900, ext. 6913. If any additional fees are due in connection with filing this Amendment, the Commissioner is also authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-0805 (Order No. LAM2P216).

Respectfully submitted,
MARTINE & PENILLA, LLP



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